
5 YEARS IN CORRECTIONS



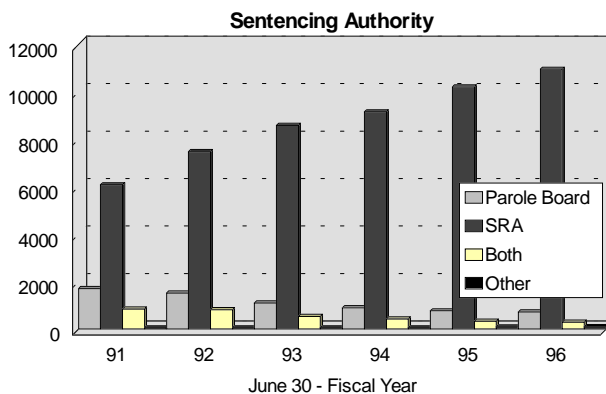
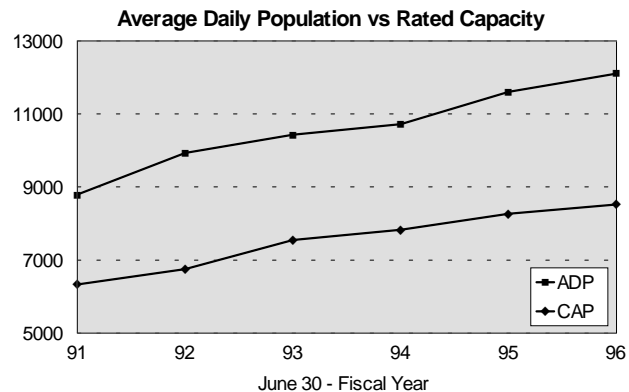
**Washington State Department of Corrections
Planning and Research Section
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April 1997**

5 Years in Corrections

The Washington State Department of Corrections publishes offender based statistics on a quarterly basis. This briefing paper presents a summary of the data from reports published between June 30, 1991, and June 30, 1996. In many of the graphs that follow, data for June 30, 1991, is presented for comparison with data at the end of each of the next five fiscal years.

Inmate Population

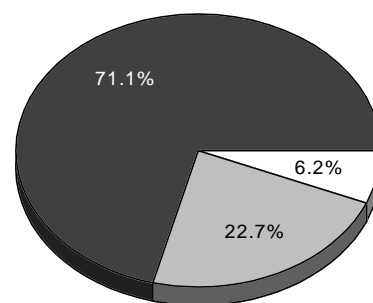
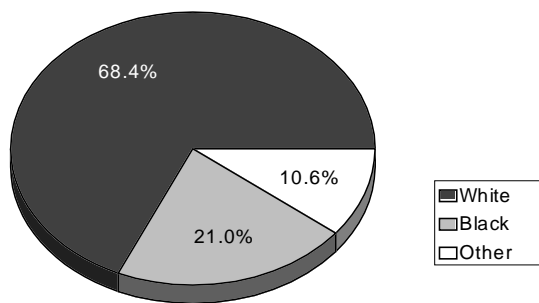
There has been a steady increase in the number of offenders housed in Department facilities during the last five years. The rated capacity has gone from 6,369 in June 1991 to 8,525 in June 1996, an increase of nearly 35 percent. The population has gone from 8,791 to 12,113, a 38 percent increase.



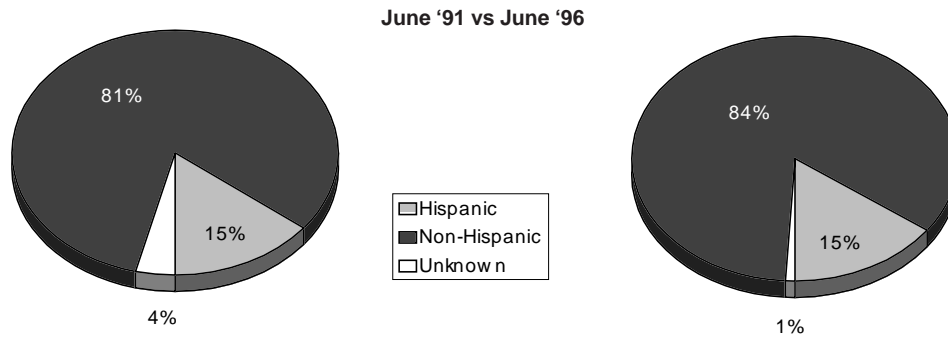
The Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) was implemented in 1984. By June 1991, approximately 70 percent of the inmates in the prison system were serving SRA determinate sentences. By June 1996, at least 90 percent of our inmates were serving SRA sentences.

The racial distribution of inmates has changed very little over the years. Approximately 70 percent of the inmate population is white, 22 percent is black, and the remainder is made up of other nonwhites.

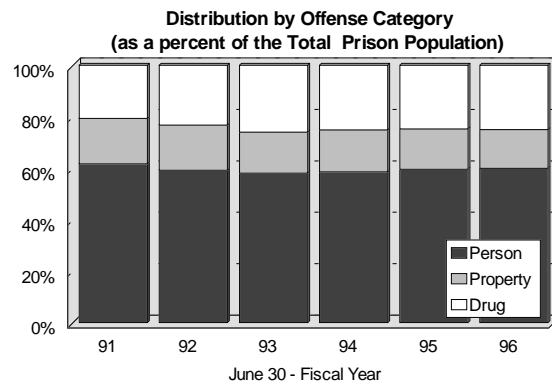
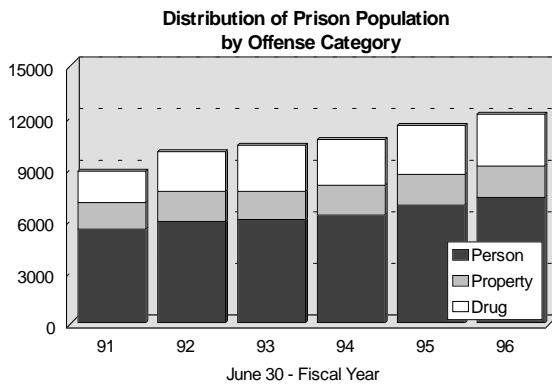
June '91 vs June '96



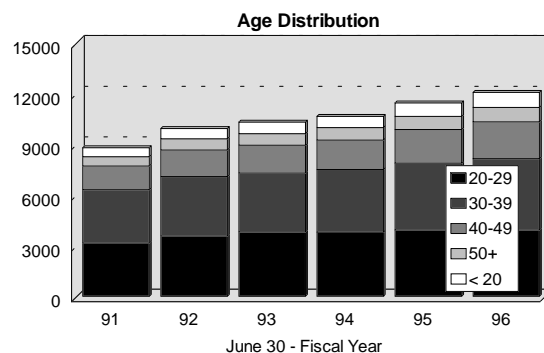
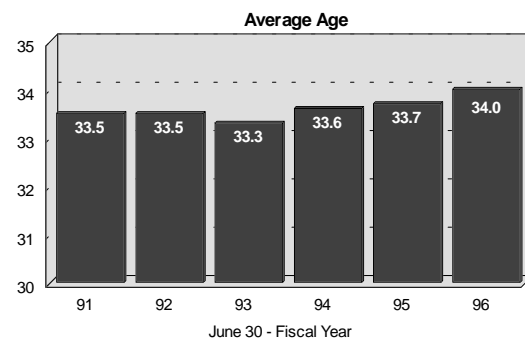
Likewise, the Hispanic origin distribution has remained relatively constant over the last five years. Inmates of Hispanic origin constitute 15 percent of the population.



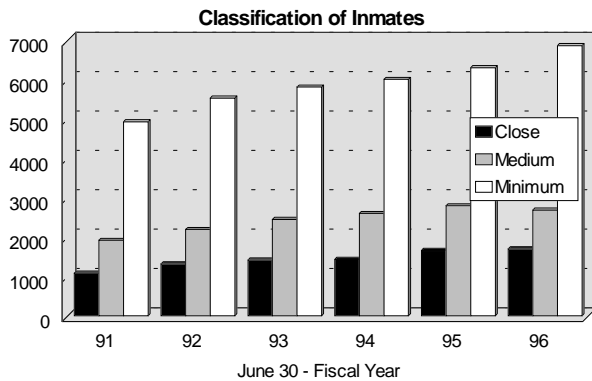
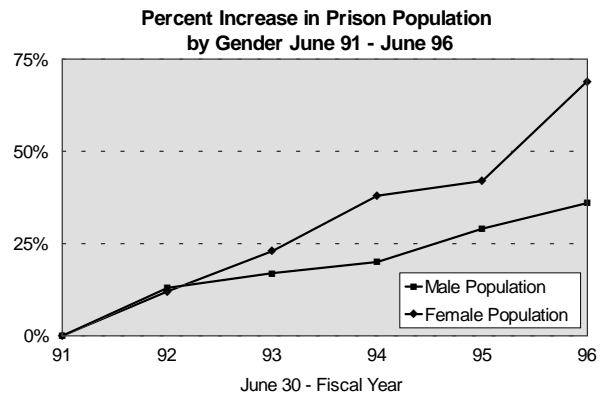
The offense distribution of the inmate population has shifted toward more person and drug offenders. Drug offenders made up 21 percent of the population in June 1991, 25 percent in June 1996.



While the average age of the inmate population has changed very little in the last five years, 33.5 years in June 1991 versus 34.0 years in June 1996, the relative percentages of both younger and older inmates have increased. In June 1991, 0.1 percent of the inmate population was under 18 and 6.0 percent was over 50. Those percentages had increased to 0.6 and 7.3, respectively, by June 1996.

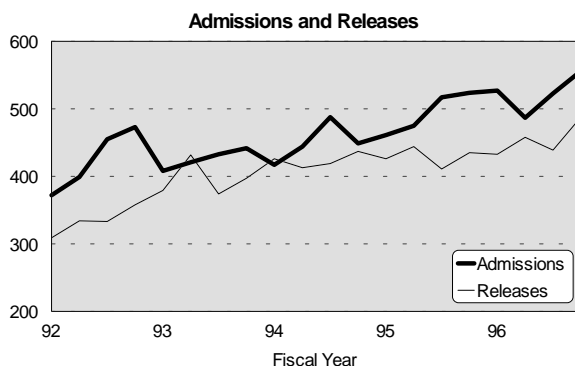
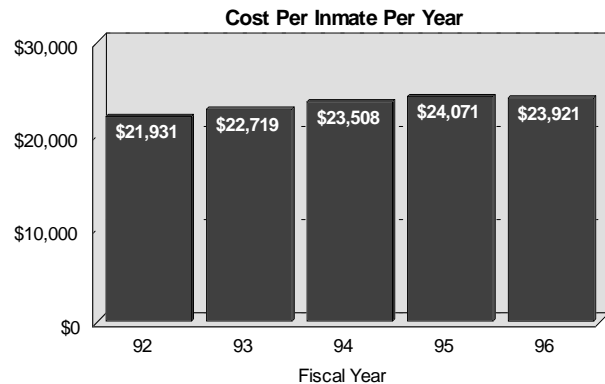


The number of female offenders has grown disproportionately during the last five years. The female population went from 520 in June 1991 to 880 in June 1996, a 69 percent increase. The male population increased by 36 percent over the same five years. In June 1996, 7.3 percent of the inmate population was female.



Inmates are classified according to a scoring system that is intended to reflect the degree of risk they represent to security and safety. A classification of "Close" indicates a high risk, while "Medium" and "Minimum" indicate relatively lower risks. The distribution of custody classification has been stable over the five-year period, with 14-15 percent Close, 24-26 percent Medium, and 59-62 percent Minimum.

Corrections costs are often cited in terms of the average cost per inmate per year. Prison costs have been rising gradually, but may be expected to level off as more efficient units and prisons are opened. Cost per inmate per year has ranged from \$21,930 to \$24,070 over the five-year period.

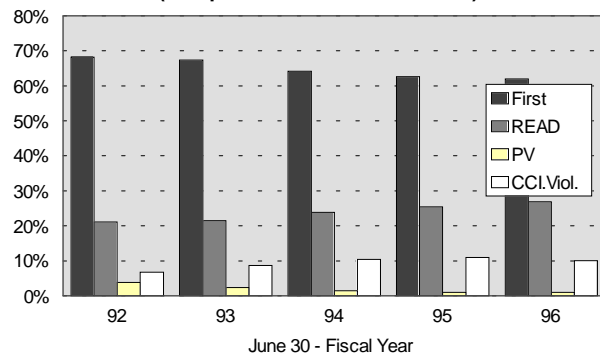


Prison Admissions and Releases

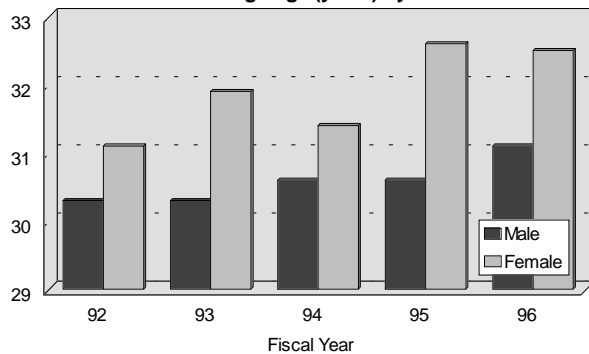
Increases in prison population are, in broad terms, a result of having more admissions to prison than releases. That has been the case over the last five years. Longer sentence lengths work to slow prison releases and are also a major contributing factor in the increase in population. The volume of both admissions and releases has risen noticeably, from 5,096 admissions in Fiscal Year 1992 to 6,249 admissions in Fiscal Year 1996, from 3,945 releases in Fiscal Year 1992 to 5,555 releases in fiscal year 1996.

The proportion of first-time admissions to Washington State prison, relative to re-admissions, has decreased somewhat over the last five years. In Fiscal Year 1992, 76 percent of offenders sent to prison by the courts were first-timers. In Fiscal Year 1996, 70 percent were. The percent of parole violators has gone down markedly, consistent with decreasing numbers of non-SRA offenders on parole. The number of offenders who enter the prison system as a result of violation of community custody inmate (CCI) status has increased nearly every year. In Fiscal Year 1992, 6.8 percent of all admissions were CCI violators, in Fiscal Year 1996, 10.3 percent were.

**Distribution of Type of Admissions
(as a percent of Total Admissions)**



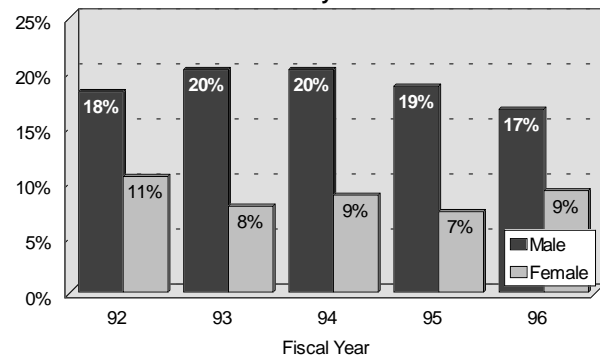
**Admissions
Average Age (years) by Sex**



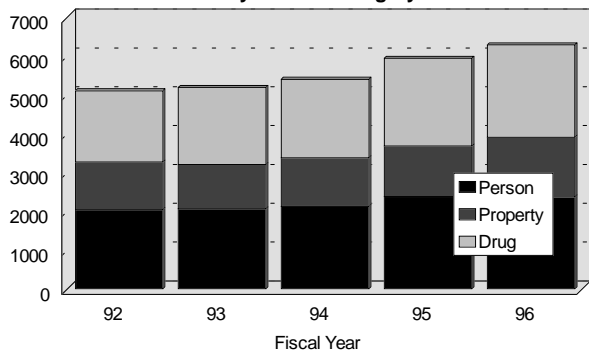
Female offenders entering prison tend to be slightly older than male offenders, and there has been a slight increase in the average age of both female and male offenders entering prison over the last five years.

The racial distribution of male and female offenders entering prison is quite similar and has stayed fairly constant over the last five years. Approximately 65 percent are white, 28 percent are black, and the remainder are other nonwhite individuals. The Hispanic origin distribution has also remained fairly constant, but there is a higher percentage of Hispanic males (18-20 percent) than females (7-10 percent) entering prison each year.

**Percent Hispanic Origin Admissions
by Sex**



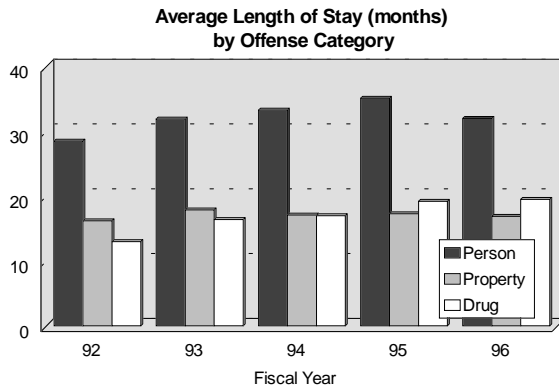
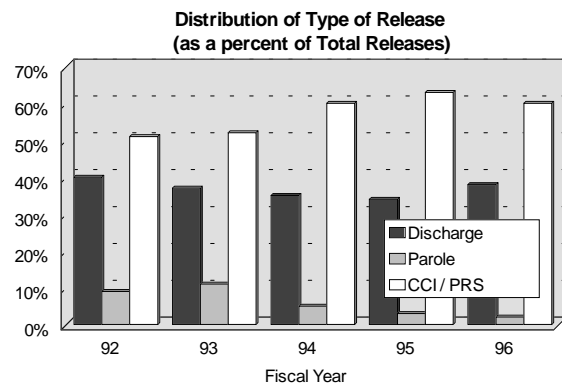
**Distribution of Admissions
by Offense Category**



During Fiscal Year 1992, 36 percent of the offenders entering prison were drug offenders and 24 percent were property offenders. For Fiscal Year 1996, drug and property offenders made up 38 and 24 percent of the admissions respectively.

Because the sentence length for drug and property crimes is generally shorter than for crimes against persons, the distribution of offenses for releases may differ from admissions. During Fiscal Year 1992, 34 percent of those released from prison were drug offenders and 26 percent were property offenders. For Fiscal Year 1996, drug and property offenders made up 38 and 28 percent of the releases respectively.

The type of release has changed considerably over the last five years. During Fiscal Year 1992, approximately 10 percent of released inmates were put on parole, 50 percent were put on community custody or post release supervision. For Fiscal Year 1996, less than 2 percent of releasees were paroled. However, 60 percent had community placement type sentences and were put on community custody (CCI) or post release supervision (PRS).



The average incarceration time spent by individuals released from the prison system, known as the average length of stay, has increased over the last five years, from 20 months to 24 months. Person offenders have a longer average length of stay than drug or property offenders.

The average length of stay would have increased even more were it not for two pieces of legislation that have resulted in considerably shorter lengths of stay for certain offenders. Offenders who go through the Work Ethic Camp, which opened in late 1993, and offenders receiving the Special Drug Offender Sentencing Alternative (DOSA), which was implemented in 1995, have very short prison stays, although they are on CCI status longer. In Fiscal Year 1996, there were 350 Work Ethic Camp graduates, with an average length of stay of 6.5 months. There were 40 DOSA offenders released, with an average length of stay of 6.8 months.

There have been several legislative changes made that will increase length of stay. One that works in this manner but is not clearly reflected in routine reporting is the Persistent Offender Accountability Act. This act, commonly known as "Three Strikes You're Out," became effective December 2, 1993. Under this legislation offenders convicted of three "most serious offenses" are sentenced to life without the possibility of release. In December 1993, the Office of Financial Management forecast indicated there would be 57 persistent offenders in prison by the end of 1997. As of June 1996, 60 persistent offenders had been admitted to prison for the rest of their natural lives.

Community Corrections

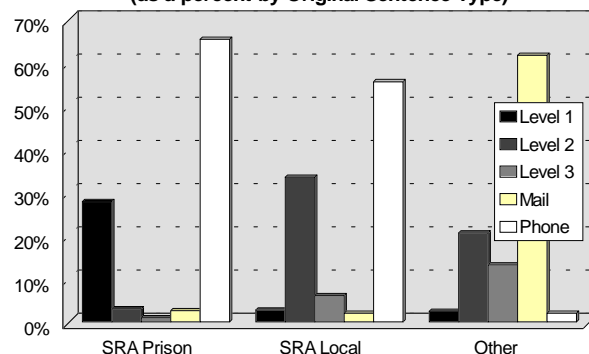
The Washington State Department of Corrections also has the responsibility to supervise adult felony offenders following their release from jail sentences, as well as those released into the community after a prison stay.

Of the nearly 80,000 convicted adult offenders in Washington State at the end of Fiscal Year 1996, 51,085 were on active supervision. There are three broad categories of offenders on community supervision, based on the original sentence they received. Approximately 15 percent had originally served an **SRA Prison** sentence. Subsequent to having served their prison time, they were meeting routinely with community corrections officers as part of a community placement requirement, or were being monitored for payment of legal financial obligations. Nearly 70 percent had received **SRA Local** sentences that involved jail confinement or other local sanctions. They were meeting routinely with community corrections officers to fulfill the community supervision requirement of the sentence, or they were being monitored for payment of legal financial obligations. The remainder, referred to here as **Other**, were either pre-SRA, misdemeanants, or out-of-state offenders with probation or parole requirements.

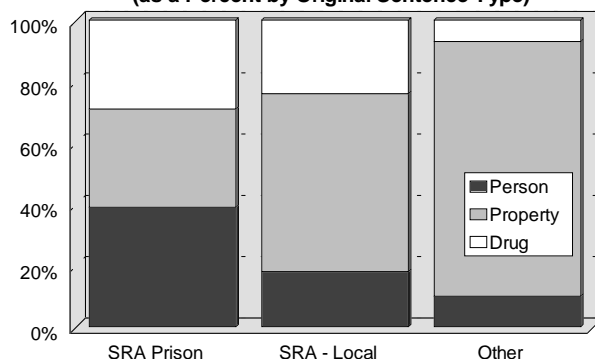
The type of and amount of contact between offenders and community corrections officers are largely determined by the offenders' sentence structure and compliance with sentence conditions. Face-to-face meetings are used for offenders who have specific conditions they must meet, as well as definite reporting requirements, or for those who pose substantial community risk. Techniques such as telephonic reporting are used to maintain contact and monitor offenders whose only remaining sentence condition is payment of financial obligations.

An offender classification system helps community corrections staff distribute their resources appropriately. There are three levels of supervision used for the offenders who warrant face-to-face contact. Offenders in Level 1 classification are generally seen about four times a month. SRA Prison offenders on community placement are classified into Level 1 while they require face-to-face meetings. Offenders in Level 2, which is made up mostly of SRA Local offenders with supervision requirements following a jail sentence, are seen about twice a month. Offenders in Level 3 are seen at least once a month. They are mainly SRA Local offenders with fewer sentence requirements or Other offenders who need face-to-face contact. There is a mail-in level, and there is a telephonic reporting level.

Distribution of Classification
(as a percent by Original Sentence Type)

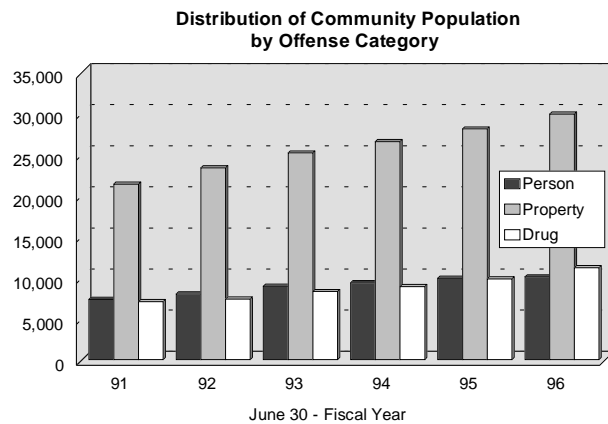


Distribution of Offense Category
(as a Percent by Original Sentence Type)

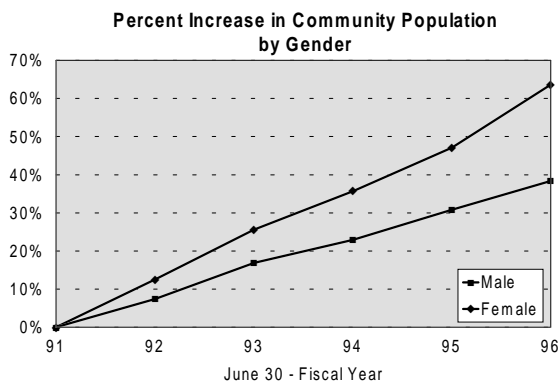
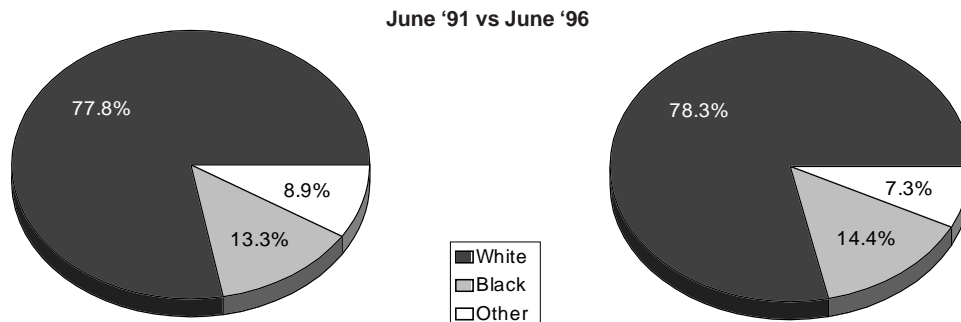


Approximately 20 percent of the offenders on active community supervision were convicted of person offenses, compared to 60 percent of the inmate population. There is a notable difference in the offense distribution among the three broad categories of offenders in the community. About 40 percent of the SRA Prison population are person offenders compared to less than 20 percent of the SRA Local offenders.

The number of offenders on active supervision has increased by 43 percent over the last five years, from 35,655 in June 1991 to 51,085 in June 1996. During that time, the offense distribution of community corrections population has remained fairly constant.

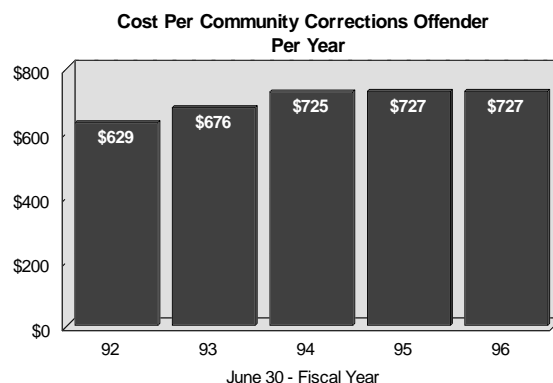


The racial distribution of the community corrections population has changed very little over the years. Approximately 78 percent of the community corrections population is white, 14 percent is black, and the remainder is made up of other nonwhites.



As is the case with the inmate population, the number of females in the community corrections population has grown disproportionately during the last five years. The female population went from 6,875 in June 1991 to 11,250 in June 1996, a 64 percent increase. The male population increased by 38 percent over the same five-year period. In June 1996, 22.0 percent of the community corrections population was female.

Community corrections costs are often cited in terms of the average cost per day to supervise an offender. For comparison with prison costs, however, it is useful to convert that to an average cost per year. During Fiscal Year 1992, the average cost to supervise an offender for a year was approximately \$629. Over the five-year period this cost has increased to \$727.



The Division of Community Corrections has a variety of interventions it uses for offenders as part of meeting the objective of maintaining offender compliance with supervision requirements and public safety. Statewide, approximately 1,000 offenders participate in weekly groups designed to impact criminal attitudes and values while disrupting offenders' networks of friends and activities supportive of criminality.

Four interventions with standardized curriculum are widely available; additional interventions have been developed locally with unique curriculum. The statewide interventions include:

Victim Awareness Education Program (VAEP): The purpose of this intervention is to increase offender empathy. This incorporates testimony from local victims. It is a closed-entry program with 12 sessions. Curriculum was developed by Department staff.

Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT): The purpose of this intervention is to improve the level of moral reasoning and challenge criminal values. It is an open-entry, open-exit program with 12 steps. Completion of the entire program can take offenders up to six months. Curriculum was purchased from Correctional Counseling, Incorporated.

Dependable Strengths Articulation Program (DSAP): This program focuses on enhancing offender employability. It aids offenders in identifying "dependable strengths" and teaches job search strategies. It is a 24-hour program intended to be offered over three consecutive days. Curriculum was developed by Department staff modeled on material from Dr. Bernard Haldane.

Relapse Prevention Education (RPE): This program aids offenders in identifying relapse triggers and developing prevention plans. It targets substance abuse and criminal behavior. It is an open-entry, open-exit program. Program completion takes approximately three months. Curriculum was developed by Department staff based on materials purchased from the CENAPS Corporation.

The most widely utilized program is MRT. Over 200 staff have been trained to deliver MRT. A Quality Assurance program is in place as well. Quality Assurance is under development for the VAEP and for RPE. RPE is the newest program and is being piloted in six locations. If successful, it will be widely expanded next year. The VAEP provides a wonderful opportunity for community involvement and has resulted in significant positive press for the Department.

The Department is exploring assessment approaches to more effectively match offenders to individual program offerings. We also plan to assess the impact of interventions on offender compliance with supervision requirements and recidivism. A small study of the impact of MRT is underway already.